

A STUDY OF MENTAL HEALTH AS AN IMPACTFUL FACTOR ON EDUCATION OF SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

This article is all about a study of mental health and mental disorders and how they affect the different aspects of education of school students. The main endeavour has been to discuss several sides of maintaining good mental health and its impact on the academic sides of school students. This paper has pointed out with the vivid description how the absence of good mental health causes serious mental disorders such as Anxiety, Alcoholism, Depression, Delinquency and Crime, and ADHD etc. This writing has shown how the study of mental health has helped school authorities and parents understand their roles and responsibilities in dealing with the emotional sides of school going children.

Keyword: Mental Health, Mental Disorders, Anxiety, ADHD, Alcoholism.

1.INTRODUCTION

Since the dawn of human civilization, the different human races had to go through the process of constant evolution and in this regard, Education has always been the prime mover of social change. The history of education is as old as the history of human civilization. Now in the present era, our social set up has gone lot more complex and complicated because the life of a modern man has become much more faster, much more hectic and more complicated ever than before. So, with the progress of time, the role of education has also got changed. Now, with the arrival of technology and scientific gadget in the field of education, education and the impact of education has now been well spread. Hence, the demand of education has also risen among the every section of society. So, with the economic upliftment of a large mass, the rate of admission into school has also gone up proportionately. So, with the

increased rate of admission the task of teachers has also become much more challenging. Here comes the necessity of looking after of mental health of students studying in schools especially secondary schools and senior secondary schools.

Our modern life is a life of cut throat competition, a life of rat race, meeting with the deadlines, a modern man does not even have time to sit and talk on different issues with his friends, family members and other near and dear ones. As a result of all these, these days joint family system has become a matter of the past and nuclear family has been the prevalent system for the past few decades. So, school going children are facing a lot of mental crisis due to their loneliness at home, unattentive or indifferent parents and this problem becomes acute during their adolescence. From this point of view, the mental health and hygiene of the students need to be looked after with the utmost importance in their school. The responsibility of teachers has gone much higher than the past. Now, the question comes what is Mental health—and how the problem of maintaining good mental health of students needs to be addressed.

2.WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is a state which means people adjusts with the environment and its components to lead a peaceful life in tune with the concerned portfolios of the individual. Mental health promotes all round development and mental prosperity. Human personality is a perfect combination of human mind and human body. Mental health is nothing but maintaining a proper shape of mental state of a human being. In this sense, mental health is the base for well-being and effective functioning for an individual and for a community. Mental health is something which is more than the absence of mental illness, it just indicates a perfect

balance between a human mind and body, it exhibits the intimate connection between physical health and behavior. Mental health refers to our cognitive, behavioral and emotional well-being—it is all about how we think, feel and behave. The term 'Mental Health' is something used to mean an absence of a mental disorder.

According to PV Lewkan, "Mentally healthy individual is one who is himself satisfied, live peacefully with his neighbors, become healthy citizen of the country and even after performing these fundamental duties has enough energy left to do something of benefit to society. According to other definition given by KA Menninger, 'Mental health refers to adjustment of human beings to the world and to each other with a maximum of effectiveness and happiness. It is the capacity to maintain an even temper, an alert intelligence, socially considerate behaviour and happy disposition. According to the WHO, Mental health is '.....a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. The WHO stresses that mental health' is not just the absence of mental disorder'.

From the above mentioned definitions few important characteristics of a mentally healthy person can be cited as:

- Mentally healthy persons always love to maintain interpersonal relationships, they are full of expertise in problem solving.
- A Mentally healthy person can adjust very well with the surrounding ambience that he comes across. They are usually extrovert in nature.
- A Mentally healthy person has a sense of personal worth, feels worthwhile and important.
- He has a sense of personal security and feels secure in a group, shows understanding of other people's problems and motives.
- A Mentally healthy person loves to live his life being an active member of the society he lives

in, he loves to listen to others' opinion and to be listened by the others as well.

- A mentally healthy person shows his utmost sense of responsibility in performing his stipulated task.
- He can give and accept life.
- He lives in a world of reality rather than fantasy.
- A mentally healthy person can guide his emotions properly, shows mental stability in managing his emotions, so he is a man of emotional maturity in his behavior and develops an ability to tolerate frustration and disappointments in his daily life.
- Overall, a mentally healthy person lives his life with varied interests. his life is a perfect example of maintaining a proper balance in doing work, taking rest in between and having recreation.

So, a healthy individual is the one who is not only physically healthy but also mentally healthy. The modern concept of health includes a sound, efficient mind and controlled emotions. 'Health is state of being hale, sound or whole in body, mind or soul'. It means the perfect functioning of body and mind working efficiently and harmoniously. So, mentally healthy individual or well adjusted person develops the following qualities in his daily life.

a) Living with own principles of life: A mentally well adjusted person always lives with his own principles of life keeping in view the demands of society.

b) Perfect sense of self judgment: knowing his capabilities, his limitations, strong points in his character are the perfect signs of a mentally healthy person.

c) Maintaining a proper balance: Based on his strength and weakness, he selects those social and individual tasks which are neither too difficult nor too easy, thus he easily achieves his goal.

d) Power of social adjustment: A mentally healthy person being a social animal knows his social responsibility and knows the art of social living and social give and take.

e)**Living a life of controlled emotions with a realistic approach** is another side of a mentally healthy person .He can control all the emotions like fear, anger ,love ,jealousy which are usually felt in our social life.

f)**Dealing with success and failure** with equal mental strength or courage is another characteristic of a mentally healthy person.

g)**Self Judgment** is one of the most important feature of a mentally healthy person who can solve his own problems without depending judgment of others.

3.RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY OF MENTAL HEALTH AS AN IMPACTFUL FACTOR ON EDUCATION OF SCHOOL STUDENTS

We all know the words of John Dewey ,the famous Educational thinker – “School is a miniature of society”. His words indicated the basic structure of schools and the role of schools as the agent of society and social changes. It is the school that has the greatest influence , after the home in forming the child’s personality. After home, school is the second place where children spend most of their time in a day. So ,school plays an instrumental part in building the overall personality of children. In the modern era ,the role of school and the role of teachers has become much more crucial because of complex nature of our society .’Child is the father of the nation’ today’s students will build our nation in the future and students of present generation will play an effective role in the policy formulation of every nation, so, students being the backbone of any nation need to be looked after by their teachers with prime importance at their age in their schools. So in schools the most important factor is the atmosphere existing there .Atmosphere what they get in their schools has a very important role to play in the making of their emotional aspect of their personality. In a healthy atmosphere the children adopt discipline and other qualities on their own. It is in the schools where students get maximum opportunities to explore their talent and potential. So, the greatest need is for providing each child with work adequate and proper to the needs of his personality .Hence, it is essential that the backward and the brilliant children should be given special treatment. In this regard, teachers are the leaders who need to perform the most important responsibility to give their students

a healthy atmosphere in which students feel encouraged, inspired ,motivated to their study. Teachers present an ideal self to the children in their charge ,their character and conduct can be such as profitably imitated by the children.

4.FACTORS OF MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS

In school, the teacher should be very careful in his activities towards their students and keep few important factors in their mind if he is to preserve and nurture mental health ,prevent mental disturbance and promote a healthy atmosphere for their students.

Imposing an atmosphere of discipline but not through creating fear of punishment. It can have an adverse impact on the minds of the students. It is better to arouse a feeling of responsibility and the intense desire to be law -abiding among the students. Self discipline is the true discipline which should be practiced in the school atmosphere.

- Democratic approach ,soft ,kind and affectionate behavior towards students can do a world of good to the confidence level of students. Teachers should deal with every student with the similar type of attitude irrespective his intelligence level ,mental capability and academic performance ,otherwise any discrepancy from the part of the teachers in dealing with the students injures the feeling of the students.
- Now-a-days ,plays ,games and sports ,extra-curricular activities and co-curricular activities go hand in hand with the academic activities of any school curriculum.. Students should be encouraged to take part in those games and sports and in other co-curricular activities through which they can maintain a proper balance between their study and other activities in the school atmosphere.
- Teacher can play the role of an educational guide ,because it is highly essential for the students studying in the secondary and senior secondary level. They are the students going through their adolescence, so their emotional crisis needs to be addressed properly ,their energy can be used for any constructive

purpose, in this regard teachers' role come very handy.

- It is through a balanced curriculum students' personality can be developed to its potential and only a relevant and scientific curriculum can increase his fund of necessary knowledge and it helps the students in reducing all unnecessary mental stress.
- Formation of good habits and practicing all those good and healthy habits are always desirable in the healthy atmosphere of schools. Teachers should come forward in the formation of good habits regarding a regular life ,balanced diet, and physical exercise ,simple living and high thinking etc.

For keeping a good mental health of students ,every teacher has to perform his duties with extra care and need to be highly attentive to every student he gets in his class. Teachers' role in the modern era has undergone a sea change and change is obvious as it is the demand of the time. With the change of time ,our social set up has also changed a lot,so in this complicated society ,the emotional side of students needs extra attention from their teachers. First of all, teachers need to understand their role and need to know how they can help their students in keeping their mental health . In this regard ,teachers need to create a conducive atmosphere in the class room and in the schools so that students can feel themselves secure and aim to achieve big in their academic record with the help of their teachers and every student can make full use of his talents and potential. To help the students ,teachers need to consider some important facts which will help them a lot in the overall process of learning. These facts are as follows.

a.Students coming from different family background may have some unwanted behavior ,but teachers need to realize that with the help of them students can change their unacceptable behavior and can bring desirable attitude in their personality.

b. Teachers need not go to their class with any prejudice or any preoccupied thoughts about their students ,rather teachers should be flexible and accept their students emotionally to create an atmosphere of security.

c. Every student is unique in his mental pattern and physical structure ,everyone differs from each other in his talent ,merit and interest. So, school curriculum should be set and followed keeping in view mainly the interest of the students ,otherwise students will not feel courageous enthusiastic in their classroom.

5.FACTORS OF DIFFERENT MENTAL DISORDERS ON ACADEMICS AND SCHOOL LIFE OF STUDENTS

Absence of good mental health among the students can lead to many serious mental disorders. And these mental disorders cause many academic problems, such as poor attendance ,difficulties with academic subjects, poor social integration ,trouble adjusting to school ,problems with behavior regulation and attention and concentration issues. Students suffering from many disorders face great difficulties in their classroom. If unidentified ,students with mental disorders will have their problem much more acute with the progress of time and students with high level of psychological stresses are much more likely to view themselves as academically incompetent. This leads to much higher dropout rates and lower overall academic achievement as well as specific academic and social problems associated with various disorders.

6.ANXIETY

Students with anxiety disorders are statistically less likely to go to college level than those without, and those with social phobias are twice as likely to fail a grade or not finish high school as students who have never had the condition. Students with mental anxiety face lot of mental crisis which affect many sides of the students. Anxiety among the students affect their concentration level which ultimately has an effect on their academic performance. Anxiety affects the confidence level of the students, which ultimately influences the overall personality of the students. Anxiety can prevent the students from seeking or forming social connections, which negatively affects students' sense of belonging and in turn impacts their school experience and academic performance .Students with anxiety may be a victim of social anxiety ,it may act as a hindrance for students creating new relationships with new people or any social reaction.

7.ALCOHOLISM

Alcoholism usually indicates a mental state in which people start depending on excessive drinking on alcoholic beverages. In such condition people can not restrict themselves from drinking alcohol and they give many reasons for this bad habit. The WHO has defined alcoholics as 'excessive drinkers whose dependence on alcohol has attained such a degree that they show noticeable mental disturbance or an interference with their mental and bodily health. Continuous alcohol consumption can destruct students' mental health. And ultimately ,it has caused serious health issue of the students. Alcoholism if sustained for long can lead students to severe mental disorders.

8.DEPRESSION

Depression is one of the severe mental disorders caused by the absence of good mental health among the students. Lack of attention from the teachers ,teachers' harsh or crude treatment towards the students can cause depressive state of mind among the students . According to the National Centre for Mental Health Check ups at Columbia University 'High depression scores have been associated with low academic achievement ,high scholastic anxiety ,increased school suspensions, and decreased ability or desire to finish home work , concentrate and attend class. Depression among the students very often forces the students leave out their study in the middle of their session and mentally depressed students end up being involved in many anti-social activities.

9.DELINQUENCY AND CRIME

The term Crime and delinquency are legal ones and their meaning varies from country to country and in the same country from one state to another. The individuals between 18 and 21 who violate the provisions of IPC an CPC are midway between criminals and delinquents and are labeled 'young' or youthful' offenders. After the trial by the court ,they are sent either to the institution or to the prisons depending on the seriousness or nature of their crimes and circumstances. Maladjustment in school can cause serious problems like criminal behavior or delinquency.

10.ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD)

Attention disorders are prime predictors of diminished academic achievement .Students with mental disorders like ADHD have to go through many serious problems such as the ability to sit still and quietly or to apply themselves to one focused task for extended durations. Much like anxiety ,ADHD can mean that students have to fight against serious problems like concentration, filtering out distracting external stimuli. The students with ADHD are found struggling with time management and organization .Students victims of ADHD face serious difficulties in communicating with others.

11.THE ROLE OF SCHOOL AND PARENTS IN MAINTAINING MENTAL HEALTH OF STUDENTS AND IN PREVENTING VARIOUS TYPES OF MENTAL DISORDERS.

At first, in case of prevention, schools need to recognize their role properly, the school authority should address the fact that they are not just an institution, but are intended to help shape the lives of students and allow them to participate meaningfully in a social aspect of this environment. The teachers need to create a conducive environment in which every student may feel his existence quite important ,students need to have a sense of belongingness .The pressure of schools, extra - curricular activities ,work and relationships with friends and family can be a lot for an individual to manage and at times can be overwhelming. Teachers need to be democratic in their behavior and approach towards their students irrespective of their talents, merit and socio-economic class etc. This may work like magic in the emotional aspect of students. Now with the passage of time , the role of teachers has changed . At present , teachers become more of friends than of the gurus in the ancient time. Teachers should be aware of students' family background and the social status, the professional status of the parents ,these information will be a vital hint for the teachers ,because with these information ,teachers will be little more careful in dealing with the students according to their family background with more efficiency and more affectionately. School based programs that help students with emotional regulation, stress management, conflict resolution and active coping and cognitive restructuring are a few suggested ways that give

students resources that can promote their mental health. Educators need to pay as much attention to the well-being of their students as they do on the academic aspect to ensure they are setting their students up for success in the future. Feeling of belongingness in the school environment helps students feel valued and welcome.

12.THE ROLE OF PARENTS

Parents have also a great part to play in maintaining mental health of students in their home environment. Home is the first school for everyone where everyone used to get their education which plays a very effective role in the formation of everyone's personality. The education which everyone gets in their home environment after their birth has a life- long effect on his or her personality. So, before going to school environment, it is the duty of the parents to nourish and nurture the mental health of their children, so it can play an effective role in the overall growth and development of their children. Parents need to be attentive to their children and spend more time with their children so that they do not feel themselves alone. Parents should be careful about the formation of good manners and good habits in their children such as cleanliness, tidiness and punctuality. Parents should respect their children's self-esteem ,their decision should also be given importance ,it is not that all the time children talk non sense ,if their decision is valued ,they will feel confident in their activities outside home. Parents very often make their children victims of their unrealistic ambition, it is their unfulfilled dream children have to fulfill ,if they fail ,they will crumble under pressure of expectation which ultimately leads them to the path of anxiety and frustration.

As it is in the tender age ,children's personality development is done for mostly ,responsibility lies within the parents and the schools how they treat children at home and in schools .In conclusion ,it can be said that maintenance of mental health is such a crucial factor which affects the overall development of children in the days to come.

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